

**THE DEFENDER AND THE DEFENDED DIALECTIC OF
AGGRESSION BETWEEN THE MOCHO***
(Motozintla-Chiapas)

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Most of the members of the Mochó group currently live in the peripheral neighborhoods of the municipal seat of Motozintla. Until the "Boundary Division Treaty" of 1882, Motozintla belonged to the Guatemalan municipality of Cuilco as did Mazapa de Madero and Amatenango de la Frontera.¹

The evangelization and religious organization of the area was, at first, in charge of the Pa Dominican dres as indicated by Remesal², but from 1537 Bishop Marroquín entrusted this task to the Order of Mercy. It is this Order that will take care of most of the Department of Huehuetenango³.

In 1602 the Mercedarians had already organized the missionary activity, and Motozintla was part of the fourth doctrine whose head, Cuilco, has the rank of a Convent.

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¹ DUBLAN, M. and LOZANO, J, M., vol. XVI, 272-275, No. 8772.

² REMESAL, A. 1966, t. I, 244,

³ Response of the First Bishop of Guatemala, D. Francisco Marroquín, to the fifth question of the report rendered before the Audiencia of Guatemala on October 17, 1551, In: Bulletin of the Order of Mercy, vol. XX, 91.

But the distances and the orographic difficulties of the way mean that missionary action is relegated.⁴

When in 1595 Fray Tomás Torres⁵ he passes through Motozintla on the way to the Highlands of Chiapas, he notes this lack of evangelization and laments the situation. He suggests that it would be much more effective for this doctrine to be attended to by the Soconusco Missionaries, since evangelization would be much easier and more effective.

However, it still depends on the Cuilco missionaries and the sporadic visits they made from time to time.

We would like to point out that, since pre-Hispanic times, one of the differentiating activities of Motozintla has been and is the production of Copal - blanco **saq' ti poo**,- black – **q'eq ti poom** - and red – **c'in poom** - also called simply peel or bark of copal.

Fuentes and Guzmán, when talking about the region, present it as “a vast territory, covered with numerous copal trees of all the species that occur in our America”⁶. This activity continues to be one of the elements of particular interest in the ethnographic study of the area, as it is exported as far as Quetzaltenango and has the reputation of being of high quality.⁷

The spoken language is Motozintleco or Mochó, and as we have indicated, the speakers have mainly concentrated in the municipal seat of Motozintla. We have also found some **mochó** isolated among the **mom** in Tolimán and Chimalapa, but they are former inhabitants of Motozintla who have emigrated for various reasons from one of the peripheral neighborhoods: Canoas, Xelajú Chiquito, Xelajú Grande, Guadalupe, San Antonio or San Lucas. They told us that they also spoke mocho in Guadalupe Victoria, but we couldn't check it and we think it's difficult.

In earlier times the language **mochó** it should have been spoken in a much larger area. It possibly spanned from the north of Motozintla to the Pacific Coast. As Otto Shumann has shown, the Tuzanteco undoubtedly belongs to the same group, although at present it presents certain variants.⁸

Until recently the name of the municipal seat and the municipality was San Francisco de Motozintla, a name that dates back to colonial times.

⁴ PEREZ, N, 1924, 10; Cf. David, G. 1931, 1, 1, 438.

⁵ Cf. NAVARRETE, E. 1978, 18

⁶ FUENTES AND GUZMAN, 1972, t, 111, 33 and 295,

⁷ GARCIA-RUIZ, J. F. 1981.

⁸ SHUMANN, O. 1966.

However, it is currently known as Motozintla de Mendoza, a name that was given to it in honor of the socialist revolutionary leader who actively participated in the process of change of the 1910s who was assassinated in 1920.⁹

Currently the municipality consists of about 27,600 inhabitants mostly speakers of the language **mom**, but Mochó is still spoken by about 1400 people in the municipal seat. Most of the mestizos in the municipality are concentrated in this same municipal seat.

As Andrés Medina has clearly pointed out¹⁰ the municipal seat has become the center of economic activity of the Sierra Madre for about 25 years and profound transformations have occurred due to the uninterrupted influx of mestizos who have totally seized administrative, economic and political power, leaving the Mochó marginalized in relation to the decision-making centers and have forced them to settle in the peripheral neighborhoods as we have pointed out.

This situation has particularly interested us, given the type of exogenous and endogenous aggressions to which the Mochó group is subjected, the "re-structuring" mechanisms of identity and identification can be studied in a privileged situation.

Given the smallness of the group and the situation in which it finds itself, a whole series of traditional elements are in frank regression or have already disappeared. This is the case, for example, of the ritual calendar as a structure of defined days with their own nominal designations, of the traditional ceremonies for the marking of cattle on St. Luke's Day... But other elements have remained in force with unsuspected vigor as we will see later.

The individual ritual activity has also been the object of systematic aggression by the different North American groups trying to evangelize the area (there are currently five extremely active churches in Motozintla) who, through a deeply dogmatic, aggressive, disrespectful and intolerant proselytism, are "'attacking" the conscience and inner freedom of the mochó man and of other groups. To such an extent that, their pretext that the actions of burning copal are pagan, they cut down the trees so that the **caa?nol** or sap with which the white copal is made.

⁹ OROZCO, A. M. 1946, 80

¹⁰ MEDINA, A. 1973

On several occasions we have seen evangelists, Adventists, witnesses, Pentecostals... go before the police authorities to accuse the Mochó of "witchcraft" practices.

Faced with this state of affairs, the ethnoresistance - guarantor of social reproduction - has been structured, and the new? **ahwal meesah** - owner of the table- or representative of the Community within the organization of the principals has created a new awareness of direct confrontation, to such an extent that his awareness as a "militant of tradition" has led him to inscribe on the frontispiece of his house: "Those who live here are Catholics, we do not want or accept Protestant propaganda, Long live Christ the King in him and in him".

This situation has also led an important part of the mochó group to ask themselves a series of questions and they have begun to develop a reflection on the specificity of their history and on the responsibility of each one in maintaining traditional fidelity, a condition of the permanence of the invocation of the ancestors and the evocation by the offspring.

Although this is not the central theme of our communication, we would like to insist nevertheless since it seems highly significant to us, because despite the constant and direct aggressions the fundamental bases of the system of representations continue to function. The reason, we believe, is the fact that the Mode of Production has not changed in its fundamental elements, because dependence on land, corn, traditional agricultural processes and their representation are still daily "practical needs". In other words, we believe that the structural elements have not been definitively altered and that the "structured and structuring" structures' continue to oppose effective resistance,

The central theme of our work has been the analysis of the mechanisms and identifying elements that have been or are put into action to ensure the defense and reproduction of certain determining structures and certain referential values.

What we want to develop next is precisely one of those sectors that resist, one of those bastions that certain members of the group use and manipulate thoroughly to justify and maintain the validity of what is believed, of what has been lived: the sector to which we will refer is that of aggression and defense, evil and its consequences, death and its causal explanations, what we are accustomed to call in an indeterminate and imprecise way, "spark plug".

However, before directly addressing the mechanisms of this sector we want to insist more explicitly on the orientation and the implicit ones of our orientation.

1. From specificity to difference

Paul Mercier in his **Histoire de l'Anthropologie** notes and explains the progression that anthropological studies have made at the level of analysis with regard to the conception that societies have about their own worldview or system of representations:

"In the previous periods, people talked about religion and magic; nowadays there is a tendency to study these phenomena as beliefs and techniques of manipulating the world and man, which acquire all their meaning only in relation to a vaster whole: the conception of the world and of the society that constitutes each human group. It has taken some time for anthropologists to recognize in the "primitives" the existence of an integrated system, with its own logic, that explains and justifies in their eyes all the institutions and all the "ideal" behaviors at least. This goes beyond the field of magical-religious facts: these facts are but the most spectacular aspect of a much broader "ideological" reality.¹¹

This explicit recognition of Mercier constitutes one of the fundamental elements of the sciences of discussion in the context of the anthropological sciences and one of his most significant advances. But neither the application to the concrete analyses has not been solved nor accepted at the level of the field praxis and the consequent analysis.

The compartmentalization of the sectors of social reality within the societies studied has often caused the perspective and specificity of the underlying logic "of the social whole" or of the "total social phenomenon" of which Mauss spoke and consequently its significant coherence to be lost.

Every society, every human group, has historically been endowed with the means of knowledge and action in relation to the specificity of the ecological and geographical environment in which it is located.

¹¹ MERCIER, p. 1971, 199

These means have been and are determined by the identifying specificity that places individuals in the concrete context, a situation that forces them to carry out the mediation of appropriation in a situation of reciprocity and dependence with said medium.

a) The system of representations

The proliferation of terminology in the field of anthropological sciences has made the operability of certain concepts increasingly relative, since often the semantic content is so indeterminate that we end up not understanding each other. I think this is the case for terms like "religion", "beliefs", "magic", "witchcraft.... For our part, we prefer to talk about REPRESENTATION SYSTEMS because we believe that it allows us to integrate the interrelation of the sectors of the "social whole" with a much broader and coherent perspective.

Following certain elements proposed by Bourdieu¹² in several of his works we could try to define —tentatively— the social system of representations as the logic resulting from the explicit appropriation elaborated by successive generations —historically and geographically located— that ensures the group its internal coherence and its social identification with the outside. This resulting -arbitrary cultural-structured and the structurant, will be internalized by group members in the form of durable dispositions -induced by the educational situation- and will modalize, from the inside, social behavior. Behavior that will reproduce the structured and structuring cultural arbitrary.

This means that the individual, a member of a defined group, can "think" only as a member of that group and the entire representative dimension of his behavior will be the result – and in large part the consequence – of the educational mediation of the family and the community structure. This educational action, induced by the behavior of the members of the group, will become the subjective - but not individual - reference of the recognition of the individual as an integral part of the community group.

¹²

BOURDIEU, p. 1972; 1980.

Such behavior constitutes the "proof" of the adaptation to the internalized structures, to the schemes of perception and action constitutive of the system of representations.

Within this perspective, we refuse to accept numerous positions that turn "the object of study" into static, fixed, Manichean reality, denying communities the right to the specificity of their internal dynamism and to their own causality. To propose as a starting point: "It is a traditional or acculturated community" implies and supposes an inability on the part of the researcher to face his object of study in the own dynamics in which the life and behavior of men and women are inscribed who, despite repeated aggressions and destructive attempts, have maintained and readapted the specificity of their identity integrating new responses throughout their historical development.

Numerous works give the impression of being self-sufficient "funeral prayers" to the "death of communities", to acculturated integration, to the "triumph of civilization over barbarism", prayers that, frequently, a kind of self-satisfaction on the part of the researcher as if he felt satisfied because what he "describes" fits and confirms his position, thus resolving what Bourdieu calls "the indeterminacy of the human".

We believe that it is necessary to approach the analysis from a dynamic perspective, thinking of reality as structured and structuring; a perspective that is capable of developing new and unprecedented mechanisms and positions suitable for recreating the explanatory "objectivity" on which the perception of the world, of individual and collective practices of the balance of social existence is based.

b) The autonomy of the sector:

Traditionally, the socially significant status and the proper function of sectors such as belief-religion, social organization, the power system, kinship, productive activity have been recognized...

But the misnamed "spark plug", "magic" ... have been in most cases, connoted as irrational or "irrational", "primitive" elements, and consequently either left aside or analyzed tangentially as part of religion or simple healing action¹³. Often the ethnologist, influenced by certain mystical currents and by certain mass media, has lent himself to treating this sector as part of the esoteric and occult mystery "that works so well at the level of a certain type of press.

But it has also been the case that, in order not to be labeled as an "idealist", the ethnologist has not faced this type of problem since he does not enter the analytical references considered valid by the socio-professional legalizing body. Traditionally there have been studies that have focused on the distinctions between religion and magic, but we believe that they have been ineffective since the indeterminacy remains.

Middleton¹⁴ for example, he confronts this differentiation by presenting religion as the specific action on the world, an action that presupposes and needs the mediation of prayer and demands the intervention of the will of the gods. Magic is presented as the will of men to act autonomously on the world. In other words, he presents religion as a "speculative practice" endowed with an instrumental character, a kind of resolute recipe.

But the ground work and certain recent materials¹⁵ they allow us to perceive – from within the experiences of the different groups - that the agents of belief have historically given themselves the means, within their system of representations, to confront aggression, evil, death... and that the coherence of these means must be sought not in their apparent form. -since they are not simple techniques or practice - but in the representation lived and shared by the aggressor, the attacked-defended and the defender.

¹³ EVANS-PRITCHARD in his excellent study on the Azandé (1972) allows himself to be carried away in part by this position when he says "It was often difficult for me to control being fallen in the *déraison*". 1972, 135.

¹⁴ MIDDLETON, J. 1972.

¹⁵ KING, p. Ph., 1972; AUGE, M., 1973, 1974; TERRAIL., J. P., 1979

More explicitly, we believe that the representations involved in the so-called witchcraft express, at the same time as other sectors of belief, the organization of the world and are part of the coherence of the integrated system of perception and action.

This "integrated" system refers to and implies broader sectors in which it acquires all its meaning and significance: the conception and representation of the person, the structure of power, aggression and defense against the forces in the presence of the social reality in which the individual recognizes himself and in which his cultural "referents" acquire coherence... In other words: the ordered system of references that, for those who are carriers of the "capital of knowledge" of the significance, allows them to understand and situate themselves in the event and in the concrete conjuncture.

Marc Augé¹⁶ he attempts a first definition of this sector that would be integrated "by a set of beliefs structured and shared by a specific population, referring to the origin of evil, illness or death and the set of detection practices, therapy, aggression that correspond to these beliefs."

Like any social relationship, this set of beliefs and practices lend themselves to different types or levels of reading¹⁷. An important part of the studies face the analysis as "representations" and propose the specific modalities of "magical thinking", of its symbolic organization ... However, although it is true that, like other sectors of the representation system, it puts into play a certain number of symbolic elements through which it is expressed, it is much more than simple expression of symbols.

As Bourdieu points out¹⁸ "symbolic systems owe their practical coherence to the fact that they are the product of practices and cannot fulfill their functions except to the extent that they are able to inscribe themselves in behavior as inescapable and necessary habits."

¹⁶ AUGÉ, M. 1974, 53.

¹⁷ CLIER, A. and MANCEL, Y., 1979; TODOROV, T, 1976.

¹⁸ BOURDIEU, p. 1972, 176.

Emphasizing this perspective, he points out later: "Symbolic stimuli, that is, conventional and conditional, act only on condition of finding conditioned agents to perceive them and tend to impose themselves unconditionally and necessarily when the inculcation of the arbitrary makes the arbitrary disappear from the inculcation and the inculcated meanings."

We want to insist on Bourdieu's perspective, because it allows us to situate the "symbolic" elements that the system of representations entails, that is, the explanatory mediations of appropriation of the medium and the forms of explicitation thereof, not as generic and universal elements resulting from a simple speculative extrapolation, but as forms of behavior, essential in the understanding of the function of ideology and its reproduction.

It is within this type of problem that we want to situate the analysis of aggression-defense among the Mochó.

2. The defender and the defended: complementarity and dependence

Before analyzing the two terms of the equation, we want to place terminologically some elements that the **mochó** they clearly differentiate.

a) Ethno semantic terminology:

The skills and action of the chimán are very well differentiated terminologically in the Mochó language, and precise functions are going to be designated with precise terms.

1. Maam (defender) or Hamaam (our defender):

These terms relate to the chimán's specific function as "defender of those who have elected him". That is to say, when someone feels threatened or feels that "a job" has been done against him, he looks for a hamaam that, due to its competence and reputation, he considers as more capable to confront the aggressor and release the aggression.

Those who have the category of **hamaam** they enjoy great prestige within the community and even abroad, because they are recognized as "depositories of knowledge" that qualifies them to face the negative forces and the action of the **t'aasoom** (the one who knows how to cast a spell) that can threaten people's life, health, balance or belongings and property.

It is this "function" that is considered to be of the "highest degree" or of the highest level of competence and, as we will see, it is the one that turns its representatives into militants committed to the living of the community tradition.

2. **Poomoom** (**poom**, copal, incense and **oon** -agentive—, the one who presents, the one who knows how to burn the copal).

The use of this term is in relation to the use that is made or not of copal in ritual or therapeutic actions. In other words, he is the one who uses the copal and knows when, how and in what way to use the **saq' you poom**, copal blanco, the **q'eq ti poom**, black copal and the **c'in poom**, shell copal sometimes called red.

Knowledge about the use of copal is essential since it is necessary to indicate to the patient, in each consultation, how many balls of black copal he has to bring for the ritual action, how many "pantes" of white copal, white copal plates...

On the other hand, since copal is the "food of the invisible", the "messenger", the smoke "that refreshes, cleanses, liberates", the knowledge about its use is, in certain cases, very precise. The copal is also a means of "reading" the will of the divinity: if it is slowly consumed and its ash forms a fine, white powder, the offering has been accepted. If, on the contrary, its dust is irregular and somewhat blackish, then the offering has not been accepted. In addition, it is necessary that these ashes are scattered next to the trunk of an evergreen tree and shaded, because the person will remain refreshed for a long time.

3. **POOSOOM** (**poos**, medicine; **oom**, agentive, the one who knows how to heal with medicine, with herbs).

This term refers to the person or function that involves the knowledge and use of plants for healing. It is the recognition of precise competence on the origin and detection of certain types of diseases, causality and therapy.

These three terms have a positive connotation, and those to whom they are applied enjoy real social prestige and their "capital of knowledge" is recognized as "effective".

On the other hand, the three terms can be used in relation to the same person – in which case the specific term related to the precise function or to different people is applied – which allows recognizing the punctual competence.

Generally, the one who is **Hamaan** it is also **poomoom** and **poosoom** the one who is **poomoom** it is usually also **hamaan** and **poosoom** but what is **poosoom** it is not necessarily **hamaam** or **poomoom**.

4. **T'ASSOM**: (**T'aas**, Witchcraft, sorcery; **oom**, agentive)

With this word the mocho designate the one who is capable of attacking, of causing evil, illness, death... This is the "witch doctor" competent to introduce a worm, make burials against the person or against his property...

It is considered that the initiation he has had has enabled him to face the forces of evil and subdue them according to his action. The mechanisms of his initiation have been different: he has had to face –secretly - at midnight, that is, at the moment when the "bad woman" **lah**, or "mala hora" expresses his power, with the saints of the church and with the forces of the underworld manifesting in the pantheon.

He has to get hold of a dead man's shin in the pantheon: since it is with the negative forces with whom he is going to "work" and from whom he will get the effectiveness of aggression.

You will be able to practice "burials" — placing in a hole made in the pantheon an article of clothing of the assaulted person or a photograph so that the person dies; a bottle of alcohol so that said person feels the need to drink and becomes drunk...

This character, whose function - true or not, but effective is attributed to him by the social consensus, is connoted as negative, is feared and at the same time hated. He is the "aggressor" par excellence. And although it is true that he is resorted to secretly when in special cases one wants to do evil to someone, he is, nevertheless, considered as nefarious in the community and is considered as the origin of evil. Unlike the "defender" – who is paid according to the means and voluntarily – the "aggressor" frequently speculates on his function and sometimes demands considerable sums: in one case that we could observe in the Future he asked for 4,000 pesos for the "intervention".

5. Puku:

The semantic content of this term is more difficult to determine. For our current purpose let's say it can mean *cadejo*, nightmare that one has during sleep and **nahual** in the sense of abilities or gifts that certain people have to become an animal during the night by making three turns to the west. To become a person again, he will make three turns to the east.

These people are also feared because they are capable of attacking the property of others (killing animals, children...) and it is by chance that they are discovered. In one specific case that they told us was the woman herself who woke up at night and did not find her husband. The next day she saw that she had chicken feathers on her hair...

In certain cases, when there are deaths or disappearances followed by animals, children ... the explanation is sought in this perspective and they told us two cases in which the community decided to kill two "nahualeros".

Sometimes an entire community can be considered as capable of becoming *nahual* – the members of it.

This is the case, for example, of Tuzantan. The **mochó** from Motozintla they are afraid of the Tuzantecos because they are Nahualeros.

This is no longer interesting, because the Tuzantecos speak practically the same language as the Motozintlecos as O has shown. Shumann.

A first consequence that we want to make explicit and that follows from this terminology is that there is a differentiation of competencies the “uses” of them are also indeterminate. That is to say that doubt is always possible, doubt that in turn establishes the indeterminacy of the possible origin of the aggression.

b) The defender:

The chimán is perceived socially in relation to the function it performs.

Individually he presents himself as a “defender” and his way of acting is in relation to the “gift” he has received, with the “qualities” of which he is a bearer. We deal with this aspect in detail elsewhere.¹⁹ Here we simply want to point out that every person who is “the bearer of a gift” has to be recognized as such by another chimán in order to start “working”. It is generally a frequently self-induced “initiation disease” that is at the origin of recognition.

The chimán who “recognizes” indicates to the patient that he must prepare to update the gift. For this you have to prepare or buy a certain number of items. In one particular case we studied he asked her to bring:

- 18 “present” (nine roosters and nine hens of white or reddish color).
- 60 balls of black copal (that is to say the balls made with the bark of the tree that after being dried is mashed by mixing it either with the sap -white copal- of the same tree with the turpentine of the ocote),
- 40 white candles.
- Two large pieces of ocote

¹⁹ GARCIA-RUIZ, J.F 1981 b,

Previous these elements the chimán carries out the "sowing" of the new initiate in one of the highest mountains of the region and which is considered as the habitat of the Santo Rayito. In this case it was the Boquerón Hill.

This sowing consists of, after cleaning it with the various elements, sacrificing the "presents" with whose blood the cross that has been previously prepared with the two pieces of ocote is sprinkled. This cross will be sown on the "stallion" or **poomibal** (place to present the offering), that is to say in front of a white pine tree so that sira of defense of which he will be defender.

Then they wait for the feast of the third of May - the feast of the cross — and then the "initiator" chimán will bring to the initiate's house another cross that he will give him as a defense of his house and his personal. Meanwhile the one who is being initiated has prepared in his living space a small construction or **poomi** (place of request or prayer) where he has installed a "table" or altar together with the representation of the saints with whom he is going to work. These saints or forces with which he is going to work have been revealed to him in previous initiatic dreams. The new initiate will place an ocote cross that he must make himself on the altar. He will be the defense of those who will come to visit him, while the cross that the initiator brings him will be his personal defense. From this moment on, the initiator will be the "defender" of the initiate.

When the latter has some problem or needs "his clean" he will go to visit his defender. He usually makes the trip about four times a year.

Once a year he will also have to go to the place where he was sown, that is, to the Boquerón hill and perform another "custom" there with the sacrifice of a rooster, 40 balls of black copal, 12 vouchers and a little white copal to "cool off". From the moment he receives "his cross" he can begin to "work" and is considered as a "defender" of the people.

The defender can be "thought" as capable of attacking by those who in one way or another fear him or have reasons to fear him.

In the matter of aggression, the intention is an act and the accusation does not need material evidence. It is enough that it is socially possible or considered as such. We will come back to this later.

3. The rital of defense

As we have said before, it is necessary to place this sector within the reference universe of the representation system. We will briefly present the main lines of the conception of evil, death and aggression.

a) Evil exists: I have lived it in me.

The structure of the spatial organization of the forces that interfere in the life and behavior of humans is organized among the Mochó as follows.

The large or higher mountains Male, Boquerón, Muzutal, Tacana, Tajumulco, Peña Huixtla, etc.) are considered as the place of residence of the **?ahwalsic** or more powerful owners: the holy Little Red Ray –**hamaam raya** our defender of the rayito–. Holy Cloud –**hamaam Musam** or **Hami im Musam**, our mother Nubazón–. Our defender the wind –**hamamm ik** etc. These forces are considered as positive and are those that produce the "good air", capable of refreshing and giving long life to men. They belong to the category of defenders and are considered as direct agents of the action of **Hawah** — Our Father-.

In the smaller hills there are certain forces that produce "bad airs" such as **Lah**, the bad woman or the bad hour, the **ahwaloom** or **shwaloom kamoom**. Owner of the deceased who is sometimes identified with the Hat and at other times with the devil. The "charms" that make certain people go crazy and whose healing supposes that the custom develops in a high mountain place, without trees and that a machete without a handle is "planted" or introduced into the earth... etc.

These "bad airs" act on men and on things and sometimes cover everything preventing "the good airs" from reaching men.

It is this situation that produces the bad, the evil.

That is why they regularly **hamamm** or defenders must climb to the highest mountains to perform the **poomyin** or I pray with burning of white copal for “the world to cool down” and the defenders to free the air.

But aggression can also come from specific people, either as an individual action or as a recourse to a **t'aasoom**.

As we said earlier, the causal plurality of aggression indeterminates its origin and makes it in turn indeterminate. That is to say, anyone can be an aggressor, anyone can be pointed out as the cause of evil, anyone can be considered as an aggressor: it is enough to attribute the intention to him, his action becomes an act.

However, if the aggression is indeterminate and does not always need the intervention of specialists, the defense always needs the defense specialists. To attack may be within my competence, to defend myself is within the competence of the one who has the "competence", that is, the one who has been socially recognized as “competent”.

And this is where the function of resistance, social control and reproduction is located.

b) Riital-practice of defense.

Generally, when a boy or a girl reaches the age of 18-19, he or she seeks a personal advocate, either on his or her own initiative or at the suggestion of the family. This choice is determined by the reputation of competence with which this or that defender is surrounded or by the family relationship that exists with him.

Once the election has been made, the person appears before the **hamaam** and expresses the desire to him. for the sowing to be done. The defender then assumes his propaedeutic function and begins to explain the profound significance of such a custom: "so that you may walk in peace, so that nothing may stand in your way, so that you may have strength, so that the holy world —**ciban q'ilaal**- i left you free and in peace...”

Then he gives the precise indications for the realization of the "seeding".

- For nine days she must come to make herself "clean" **c'iib'a cet**. To do this, you must come every day between five and six in the afternoon and bring a candle holder every day. During those nine days he will be "novenado", that is, he will not be able to retain sexual relations.

The first cleaning should start on a Monday so that the ninth day - on which the sowing will take place - falls on a Tuesday. This last day is considered the most positive within the days of the week.

- On the eighth day, coming in the evening, you need to bring the elements for the ritual action of Sowing:
 - A rooster if it's a woman or a chicken if it's a man.
 - Forty balls of black copal –q'eq ti poom–.
 - Half a plate of white copal –saq' ti poom–.
 - Twelve white candles.
 - A piece of ocote about five centimeters thick by about twenty wide and about forty-five long.

The "cleaning" is done the first eight days. To do this, the person sits on a chair before the altar of the defender, he takes the candle in his hand, stands behind and begins the ritual prayer, first in mochó and if the person does not understand it repeats in Spanish.

At certain moments during the development of the prayer, the candle passes over the back of the person's neck, forehead, arms and legs so that the evil that might be present is absorbed and disappears when being burned with the candle. Then he lights the candle and leaves it on the small bench in front of the altar. This bench has small metal cylinders embedded inside which the candles are placed.

For the first eight days the same ritual is repeated. The ninth day starts very early for the defender. He gets up around four in the morning and starts the preparations. First the manufacture of the cross of the piece of ocote begins.

About ten centimeters from the top practice a cut of the two sides and the same does another ten centimeters below. This gives the cross shape to the top. He also works on the lower part by sharpening it so that, as we will see later, it can penetrate more easily into the earth.

Once the person has arrived, he makes him enter the alatar's enclosure and makes him sit in the same way as for the cleaning.

On the altar - to the right - are placed the copal balls, the candles, the white copal and the ocote cross. The rooster is curled up in the right corner next to the door.

The defender stands behind the defendant holding in his hands all the elements except the rooster. He begins the prayer - which is very similar to that of the clean one in its first part - emphasizing: "Free him from enchantments, sanding, bad magic, they have no power only you - holy world - have power. If there is a burial - an act of witchcraft against him - let the holy river, the holy water, take him away... Take the salt off his door, put the gold on..."

Throughout the prayer it also passes over the head, on the forehead, the arms, the legs, the feet, all the elements with the same purpose as the candle during the cleaning.

Then take the rooster or hen and repeat the same operation. After finishing this first part of the ritual action, he goes out and prepares to sacrifice the rooster. In the garden or orchard hold the animal with one foot. Take the machete with the right hand and hold the neck with the left. He makes one or several cuts on the neck and when it starts to bleed he places the rooster on top of the cross so that the blood runs off and covers the cross. He then throws the rooster at a certain distance. It flutters, it moves, until at the end it is definitely dead. The position in which it remains is one of the reading indexes of the acceptance or not of the offering for the Holy World and consequently of the liberation of the defended individual.

If the rooster is left with its legs down or its body is in a west-east direction, the life of the defendant is in danger. He is looking towards the sunset, towards the end. In this case, the sowing should be carried out again three days later.

If, on the other hand, the rooster is facing east-west and the legs are up, it is a sign that the offering has been accepted. In this case the release of the defendant will take place and his life will be long.

The cross is then collected and - covered with blood - taken inside the building where the altar is. It is placed on the floor to the right side of the altar and perpendicular to it. Then four candles are lit, one at each corner of the vertical axis of the cross and the rest of the candles are placed in a row, parallel to the altar on the small bench that we have talked about before.

The purpose of this row of candles is to “cover” the view of those who want to harm the defendant so that they cannot realize that the ritual of their defense is being performed.

The other four candles that are next to the cross are a second element of reading the will of the Holy World: if they are consumed vertically the offering is accepted. If they bend, twist or any of them is consumed intact leaving free and without consuming part of the wax is that the ritual action has not been accepted. In the latter case, the defense ritual must also be performed three days later again. While the candles are being consumed the defender prepares the censer – **seq’ baal poom**, copal burner- and after placing some embers from the stove deposit the black copal balls and the pieces of white copal.

The black copal is considered in all cases as “food of the invisible”, as part of the offering belonging in its own right to the divinity. The purpose of the white copal is to “refresh” the life of the defendant. The copal is allowed to consume in front of the cross placed on the outside -defender's defense-. It should be consumed slowly and gradually white ashes should begin to appear. Once everything has turned to ash, the defender takes the censer and goes to deposit said ashes at the foot of a tree that has abundant foliage, so that “his sowing”, the sowing of the defended, and consequently he himself refreshes and has a long life.

Once the candles have been consumed, the defender takes the cross and takes it away to “sow” it in one of the two **sooc** that you have in your living space.

The **sooc** it is a place consciously chosen by the advocate in connection with the structural causality of the cold-heat disease.

One of these **sooc** it is always in a dry place, that is to say in a place where the sun gives directly. There the defender sows – at the moment he is recognized as such - a jocote (*Spondias purpureae*, L., *anacardiaceae*), which in mochó is called **po'n tee'**. In that place the crosses of defense of people prone to get sick from cold cause will be buried. We could observe next to this tree numerous crosses. We counted two hundred and sixty-seven. (This does not mean that two hundred and sixty-seven different people have been sown, because when they are sick they can be sown again.)

The other **sooc** it is always located next to a wet place, a spring or a river. This place should be shaded by leafy trees and the defender specifically plants a thicket (*Casimira edulis*, Llave et Lex., *raceae*), which the Mochó call **'aha' tee'**. Here are sown those who have a propensity to get sick from hot causes. In this way the defendant will be fresh and will be able to live a long life.

Generally speaking we can establish another level of opposition between those two **sooc**: The one that is in a dry place next to the jocote is also used to sow the elderly. He needs the "warmth" to have a long life and not fall ill. It is considered that such people are more prone to diseases due to cold.

Young people, on the contrary, are considered to be more likely to fall ill from hot cause. That is why they are usually sown in the **sooc** located next to the water. However, the first dichotomy we present is valid in both cases. There are young people who fall ill because of cold and vice versa.

The sowing of the cross is done by striking with a stone on it. Once it has been sufficiently introduced on earth and the defender offers a drink to the holy world imploring that it be accepted and that the defended have a long life. The drink is poured while with the bottle the defender makes crosses.

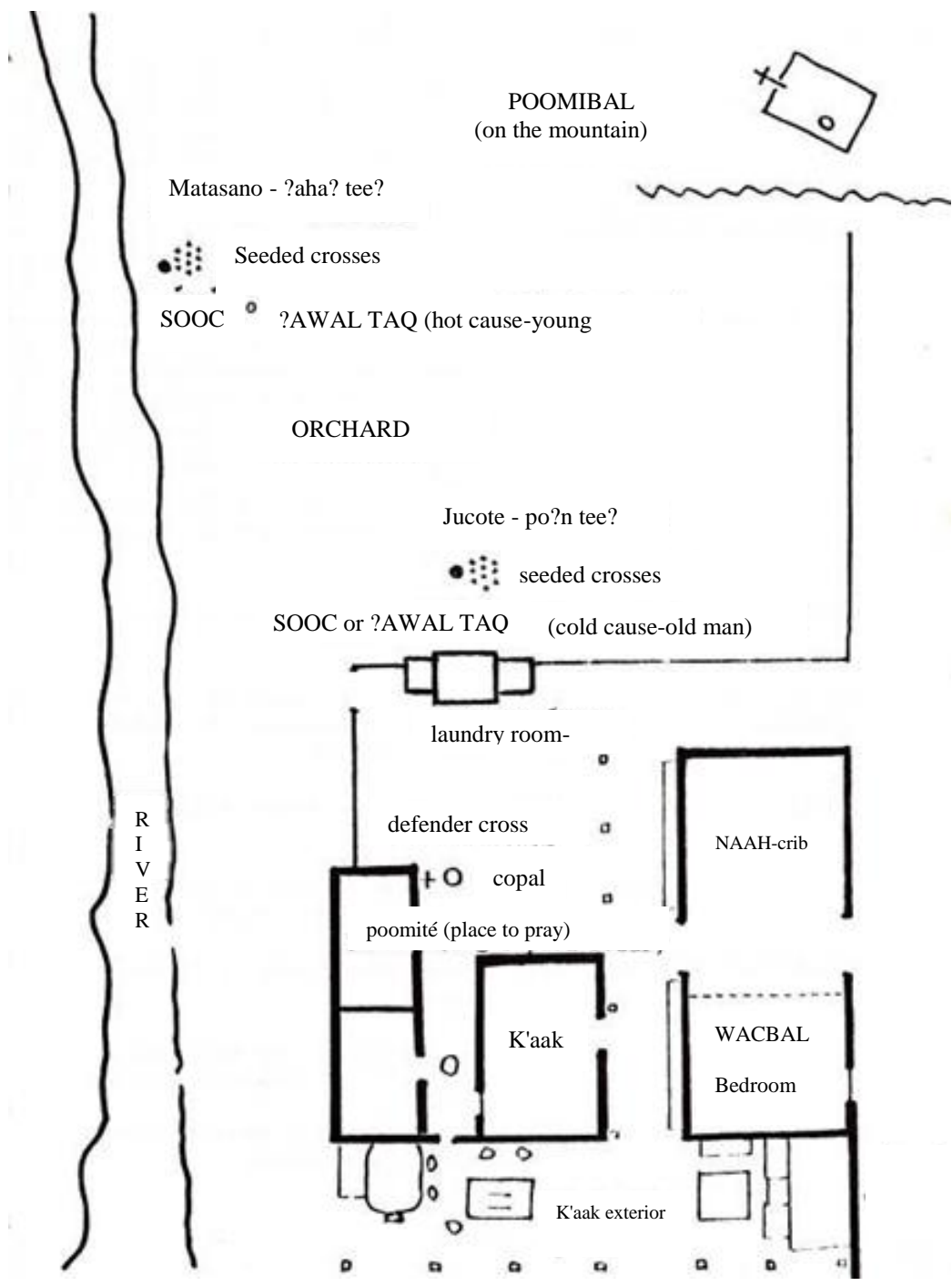
Returning to the hypothesis we proposed at the beginning, this sector of the representation system has retained a profound validity. The defender uses it to carry out his propaedeutic function throughout the process, insisting on the veracity of what has always been believed and on the risk of death that stalks the informers of tradition. He tells concrete cases, interprets, gives meaning, calms consciences, intimidates them if necessary...

If, as we said above in the causal perspective, the intention is an act and the stimulation of fidelity threatens, the reason for the importance of the sector will be understood: the defender “must” defend the defendant, but at the same time the defendant must defend himself being faithful.

The responsibility of the defender – to remember himself in the special ritual actions of his defended, to offer copal in the **poomibal** - ritual place that the defender received in the mountain and to which he resorts in specifically serious cases - climbing the highest mountains to ask for the “liberation of the air”, going to his own defender to make himself worthy to defend ..., are considered by the defender as inescapable personal obligations. But the defendant cannot be defended against his will, against his infidelity, against his contempt for what he has lived and believed.

If we accept that in every system the consent-violence opposition is an alternation of control, in this defender-defended relationship it also works. If the defender has “power” to establish the defense, the ambivalence of his power determines uncertainty, fear, dependence, indeterminacy.

If he is able to enter into a relationship with invisible forces, ambivalent and dangerous forces; if he is the depository of the “capital of knowledge”, if the collective consensus recognizes him as competent, it is because this competence protects aggression. Protection that necessarily implies knowing how to attack, to assault. But, being each one a potential victim, the dependence is twofold: that he defends me and does not attack me.



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